

Edgecombe County Employee Newsletter

July 2011

From the County Manager

At their meeting on Tuesday, the Board of Commissioners approved the budget for FY 2012. As it has been the case for several budget cycles now, we were faced with the challenge of increasing costs and decreasing revenues. But overall, I think we presented a budget that makes the best of a difficult situation, and most importantly puts the employees as priority. We are also seizing the opportunity to move forward with improvements in office placement and configuration that will improve our service.

Unlike many other units of local government, we have been able to maintain the same level insurance coverage, while minimizing the additional impact to you as far as out-of-pocket costs. Copays are increasing only slightly from \$25 to \$30 and \$50 to \$60. Though the annual deductible limit is going from \$850 to \$1250, we did increase the county contribution to your Flexible Spending Account from \$100 to \$150.

As some of you may have seen, construction is well underway at our Human Services Building as well as the renovations at the Courthouse and Administration Building. Though there is some construction traffic, and the inevitable banging and bumping that goes along with construction, overall I think the disruption to our citizens and our work is minimal. I appreciate you bearing with it. Some offices will be moving, which is tough, but in the end, we will be able to improve our efficiency and service to our citizens.

Again, thank you for your hard work and perseverance. Keep up the good work. Have a Happy and Safe 4th of July Holiday!



Important Dates

07/01 Tax Collector's Office closed for EOY Processing

07/04 Offices closed for Independence Day

07/05 Commissioners Meeting 7:00 PM

07/06 Department Head meeting

07/20 Department Head meeting

Celebrate Our Freedom!

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

Declaration of Independence

Tips for Saving Money at the Pump!

Though gas prices have come down some in the last 30 days, its obvious they are not falling as fast as they rose. So with summer travel plans in your future, here are a few tips to help you save money at the pump from the *Alliance to Save Energy*.

Driving Tips

Curb road rage. Speeding, rapid acceleration, and rapid braking can lower gas mileage by 33% at highway speeds.

Ditch "junk in the trunk." An extra 100 pounds in the trunk cuts a typical vehicle's fuel economy by up to 2%.

Decrease your speed. Gas mileage usually decreases rapidly above 60 mph. Each five miles per hour over 60 mph is like paying an additional 24 cents per gallon for gas.

Avoid idling. Idling gets 0 mpg. Cars with larger engines typically waste even more gas while idling than cars with smaller engines.

Buy \$mart. When buying a new or used vehicle, think high gas mileage. Check out the U.S. Department of Energy's website www.fueleconomy.gov

Maintenance Tips

Inflate your tires. Keeping your tires properly inflated is simple and improves gas mileage by around 3%.

Tune up. Fixing a car that is noticeably out of tune or has failed an emissions test can improve its gas mileage by an average of 4%. Fixing a faulty oxygen sensor can improve mileage by as much as 40%.

Check and replace air filters regularly. Replacing a clogged or dirty air filter keeps impurities from damaging the inside of your engine, though in newer model cars it does not improve fuel efficiency.

Select the right oil. Using the manufacturer's recommended grade of motor oil can improve gas mileage by 1 to 2%.. Motor oil that says "Energy Conserving" on the API performance symbol contains friction-reducing additives. Also, change your oil to extend the life of your vehicle and to save even more money.





Quote of the Month

Ah, summer, what power you have to make us suffer... and like it. ~Russell Baker

Be Cool, Be Healthy!

Now that summer has arrived, we're all looking for ways to beat the summer heat. Here are some quick tips to help you stay cool and healthy this summer:

- Instead of ice cream, opt for the frozen yogurt. Even though frozen yogurt still has a lot of sugar, it generally has less fat in it. A better alternative would be to opt for the non-frozen yogurt. It's cool, light, and refreshing in the summer heat. Remember, everything in moderation.
- Make it a point to load up on fruit. Fruit is generally low in calories and loaded with other nutrients that are beneficial to your body. Watermelons are 92% water, a delicious treat in the summer heat. Another great way to get cool fruit is to buy it frozen. Frozen fruit has the same (or sometimes better) nutritional value as fresh fruit. A frozen strawberry will be a delicious and nutritious way to stay cool.
- Opt for water over soda. Your body needs water for every function it will perform. It is recommended that a person drink 6-8 cups of water per day. You need more water when you're outside in the sun or exercising. If you must have a soda, try to drink one cup of water for every cup of soda that you drink.

With these small changes, you can stay cool and refreshed in the summer heat. Remember to wear plenty of sunscreen and stay well hydrated. Stay cool!

Submitted by Derrick Haskins, Health Education Specialist



Staff News

Edgecombe County health care participants should have received or will be receiving a new CIGNA ID card in the mail prior to July 1, 2011. Edgecombe County Account Number has changed and the old card will no longer be valid. Please present the new card to your physicians and pharmacies as soon as possible. Any claims filed against the old Account number after June 30, 2011 will be denied. If you did not receive your ID card, please contact Carolyn Hedgepeth by calling 641-7832 or email at carolynh@co.edgecombe.nc.us

There are items left over from the Relay for Life Silent Auction. Drop by the Planning Office and find something you like. They just ask for a small donation to go towards RFL.

The Register of Deeds has implemented a new system called "PropertyCheck" to help protect citizens from potential property and mortgage fraud. It's a 24/7 service that allows citizens to sign up to receive an email or text notification when a document is recorded containing the name(s) that have been entered. And it's FREE! Go to the County's website for a link to the page as well as instructions.

The Tax Collector's Office will be closed on July 1st for end-of-the-year processing. Water & Tax Payments can still be placed in the drop box.

La-Doris Burnette, DSS is requesting shared leave. If you would like to donate leave, contact Carolyn Hedgepeth at 641-7832 or carolynh@co.edgecombe.nc.us